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# A Positive Role of *Nidra* in Mental Health

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## ABSTRACT

The three primary life milestones mentioned in the ancient *Ayurvedic* texts are *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* of these, *Nidra* is one that is particularly important to humans. *Nidra* is an essential component of daily existence. *Nidra* can create major medical conditions if it is not taken regularly, which can impact both physical and mental health. Many pathological illnesses known as *Anidra* (primary insomnia) are brought on by a lack of *Nidra*. It eventually develops into a chronic disorder known as secondary or tertiary insomnia. The *Samhitas* contain the complete study of *Nidra* and its classification in classical science.

**Key words:** *Nidra*, Mental Health, *Anidra*

## INTRODUCTION

This is a state of nature which causes encapsulation to the consciousness of a person.

### Definition

The definitions given in ancient texts are as follows-

- The mental process of sleep is knowledge devoid of cognition. Sleep is a state of unconsciousness, although consciousness about one's own unconsciousness endures, according to *Acharya Vyas*.<sup>[1]</sup>
- The "*Mandukya Upanishad*" states that "*Alma*" experiences *Nidra*, or the state of not having any dreams or desires, and that condition is known as "*Susupti*."<sup>[2]</sup>

- Acharya Charak* confirmed that a person experiences sleep when their sensory and motor organs become inactive, their mind (as well as their soul) becomes weary, or both, etc.<sup>[3]</sup>
- Acharya Susruta* taught that sleep happens when *Tamas* covers the *Hridaya*, the *Chetana*'s seat. *Nidra* is the state of combination of mind.<sup>[4]</sup>
- According to *Acharya Dalhana*, the *Susruta* commentator states, that *Nidra* is the state of combination of mind and intellectual in which the person feels happy.<sup>[5]</sup>
- According to *Astanga Sangraha* commentary, stated that, the *Manovaha Srotas* become accumulated with *Sleshma* and mind is devoid of sense organs because of fatigue, when individual fell asleep.<sup>[6]</sup>

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## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials related to *Nidra* and Sleep physiology have been collected from different journals, Ayurvedic text books, authentic websites (Pub Med etc.), Reputed Magazines, Authentic literatures, Manuscripts, Sanskrit Dictionary etc,

### Significance of sleep

The three primary pyramids of life - *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* -are essential to maintaining human

health. Three components; *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya*, are compared with triangles in *Ayurvedic* literature and are referred to as the three *Upastambh* as or Tripods. The worth of *Nidra* is established by its inclusion in the three *Upastambha*.<sup>[7]</sup> When discussing *Nidra*, *Acharyas* explained that sleep determines happiness and sadness, development and wasting, strength and weakness, virility and impotence, and termination.<sup>[8]</sup>

### Physiology of sleep

Sleep happens when the mind is tired. Sleep is caused by cerebral ischaemia. *Ayurvedic* mental activities are correlated with higher brain centres such as the associated area, pine and post central gyrus, and so on, which are located in the cerebral cortex. Thus, as a result of the decreased cerebral blood flow, the mind becomes quiet, which leads to sleep.<sup>[9]</sup> Sleep patterns are controlled While awake, the brain's two main nerve cell systems interact to keep the animal in a state of alertness. The upper brain creates acetylcholine, which the animal uses as a neurotransmitter (NT), while the brain's midbrain receives inputs to activate the thalamus. Consequently, it stimulates the prefrontal brain and produces an awake EEG pattern. But while engaging in Random Eye Movement, the cholinergic nerve cells, thalamus & the cortex are in s condition, similar to wakefulness but the brain is in random Eye Movement (REM) sleep. The difference is supplied by three sets of serve cells in the upper part of the brain stem. The nerve cells that contain the neurotransmitter.

Two subsets of hypothalamic nerve cells regulate the brain stem cell groups responsible for arousal. Neurotransmitters called inhibitory NT and GABA are present in one subset of nerve cells located in the ventrolateral pre-optic nucleus. The suprachiasmatic nucleus, which regulates the body's circadian rhythm, has a profound impact on the sleep cycle. Clock genes are present in these hypothalamic nerve cells. wherein sleep, hormones, and other physiological processes go through a biochemical cycle that lasts nearly exactly 24 hours.<sup>[10]</sup>

### Functions of sleep

A good night's sleep promotes the *Dhatu Samya* (balance of body elements), alertness, clear vision, a healthy complexion, and strong digestion. According to *Acharya Susurut*, people who get enough sleep at the right times won't get sick of any kind, have a cool, collected mind, gain strength and attractive features, have good virility, have a beautiful body, aren't weak or obese, and have long, healthy lives.<sup>[11]</sup>

### DISCUSSION

The study's key finding: There is a direct correlation between sleep and mental health. The interaction between *Sharira* and *Satva* in all aspects of life is emphasised by *Ayurveda*. Sleep plays a significant role in mental health issues and is often included in the diagnosis criteria for certain disorders. Due to hectic schedules and stress, people in this day and age are not receiving enough sleep, which has led to work hours interfering with sleep. Another factor that reduced the amount of time spent sleeping was tension. A healthy individual will become a patient if they don't get enough sleep. At first, it's not a major issue. However, it later causes a variety of health problems and illnesses.

### CONCLUSION

This article's primary goal is to provide an outline of the concept of *Nidra* and emphasise its significance for human life. *Nidra* is one of the most significant topics to research in the modern period. In the current scenario, *Nidra* is a major element because of the demanding job and study schedules. *Nidra* is essential to living a healthy life. Our *Acharyas* have already discussed *Nidra* and its upkeep before 5000 years ago. They also explained the *Ritu* according to *Ahara* and *Vihara*. Additionally, *Acharyas* discussed the causes, diagnosis, and therapy of *Anidra*.

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